

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1 through 7 and 14 through 16.

Please amend claims 8 through 13, 17, and 18 as follows:

1. (CANCELED)

2. (CANCELED)

3. (CANCELED)

4. (CANCELED)

5. (CANCELED)

6. (CANCELED)

7. (CANCELED)

8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method as set forth in ~~claim 7~~ claims 17 or 18 wherein said step of selecting an ~~input~~ attaching parameter includes selecting an attachment location for attaching an upper attachment bracket portion of the instrument panel support structure relative to the vehicle.

9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method as set forth in ~~claim 7~~ claims 17 or 18 wherein said step of selecting an ~~input~~ attaching parameter includes selecting an attachment location for securing a center support bracket portion of the instrument panel support structure relative to the vehicle.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method as set forth in ~~claim 7~~ claims 17 or 18 wherein said step of selecting an ~~input~~ attaching parameter includes selecting an attachment location for securing an outer portion of the instrument panel support structure relative to the vehicle.

11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method as set forth in ~~claim 7~~ claims 17 or 18 wherein said step of selecting ~~an input~~ a locating parameter includes defining a centerline location for a center portion of the instrument panel support structure relative to the vehicle.

12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method as set forth in ~~claim 7~~ claims 17 or 18 wherein said step of selecting ~~an input~~ a locating parameter includes defining a centerline location for a driver side portion of the instrument panel support structure relative to the vehicle.

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method as set forth in ~~claim 7~~ claims 17 or 18 wherein said step of selecting ~~an input~~ a locating parameter includes defining a centerline location for a passenger side portion of the instrument panel support structure relative to the vehicle.

14. (CANCELED)

15. (CANCELED)

16. (CANCELED)

17. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method as set forth in claim 16 including ~~the step of parametric design of an instrument panel support structure for an instrument panel in a vehicle comprising the steps of:~~

selecting a vehicle body style for the vehicle from a vehicle library stored in a memory of a computer system;

orienting an occupant within the vehicle body;

orienting a steering column within the vehicle body;

selecting a locating parameter for locating an instrument panel support structure within the vehicle body;

selecting an attaching parameter for attaching the instrument panel support structure within the vehicle body;

selecting a predetermined condition for the instrument panel support structure within the vehicle body;

electronically generating a parametric design of an instrument panel support structure using the locating parameter, the attaching parameter and the predetermined condition;

packaging an instrument panel component within the parametric design of the instrument panel support structure;

determining if the parametric design of the instrument panel support structure meets a predetermined criteria using a computer-aided analytical technique;

determining if the parametric design of the instrument panel support structure should be changed if the predetermined criteria is not met;

determining if a parameter should be changed if the parametric design of the instrument panel support structure should be changed;

modifying the parameter if the parameter should be changed; and

using a computer-aided engineering analytical technique to determine whether the design of the instrument panel support structure meets a predetermined criteria.

18. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method as set forth in claim 16 including the step of parametric design of an instrument panel support structure for an instrument panel in a vehicle comprising the steps of:

selecting a vehicle body style for the vehicle from a vehicle library stored in a memory of a computer system;

orienting an occupant within the vehicle body;

orienting a steering column within the vehicle body;

selecting a locating parameter for locating an instrument panel support structure within the vehicle body;

selecting an attaching parameter for attaching the instrument panel support structure within the vehicle body;

selecting a predetermined condition for the instrument panel support structure within the vehicle body;

electronically generating a parametric design of an instrument panel support structure using the locating parameter, the attaching parameter and the predetermined condition;

packaging an instrument panel component within the parametric design of the instrument panel support structure;

determining if the parametric design of the instrument panel support structure meets a predetermined criteria using a computer-aided analytical technique;

determining if the parametric design of the instrument panel support structure should be changed if the predetermined criteria is not met;

determining if a parameter should be changed if the parametric design of the instrument panel support structure should be changed;

modifying the parameter if the parameter should be changed; and

using a computer-aided human factors analytical technique to determine whether the design of the instrument panel support structure meets a predetermined criteria.